

For Immediate Release
March 13, 2020

Contact: 262-284-8170

Recommendations for Residents of Washington and Ozaukee Counties Regarding COVID-19

Washington & Ozaukee Counties, WI

On March 12, 2020, Governor Tony Evers [declared a state of public health emergency](#) in response to new cases of [COVID-19](#), directing the Department of Health Services (DHS) to use all the resources necessary to respond to and contain the outbreak. On March 13, 2020, County Administrators declared a state of public health emergency in Washington and Ozaukee Counties.

The Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department is closely monitoring the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a virus strain that began to spread in people in December 2019. COVID-19 is a new (novel) respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

As the situation continues to change rapidly, our top priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of our community. The Health Department routinely plans, trains, and exercises with partner agencies such as emergency management, first responders, hospitals, and schools to effectively implement community-wide responses to a pandemic or emerging infectious disease. These plans are updated and tested routinely, in accordance with CDC requirements, with partners throughout the regions. To help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we recommend following CDC guidelines, including:

- **Practice good hygiene.** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially prior to eating and drinking, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- **Frequent disinfection** of surfaces such as desks, counters, and doorknobs will help minimize the spread of illnesses.
- **Get a flu shot.** Vaccine is still available at many locations including the Health Department, pharmacies, grocery stores, primary care providers, etc., just be sure to call ahead to confirm. Contrary to popular opinion, the shot does not make you sick. If you receive the flu vaccine and still get sick, you are less likely to pass the sickness on to others and recovery is quicker.
- **Stay home if you are sick.** Seek medical advice if you feel sick and, within the past 14 days, have traveled to any of the international or domestic areas with sustained (ongoing) transmission.
 - Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office, urgent care, or emergency room. Inform them of your recent travel and your symptoms.

- **Practice and promote social distancing.** Social distancing means remaining out of crowded public places, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.
- **Avoid unnecessary travel.** The CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to areas with high risk of transmission.

Public health authorities at the federal, state, and local levels are working around the clock to reduce the risk to the public. We are working to quickly identify and test anyone who may be infected to ensure they receive the appropriate level of care, and are isolated to prevent any additional transmission. We are also coordinating with CDC to identify individuals affected internationally and domestically and ensure they are screened for symptoms and are monitored appropriately in case they develop symptoms.

The Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department continues to monitor the threat levels and will continue to provide updates as more information is learned. For the latest information on COVID-19 and influenza, please go to www.cdc.gov.

####